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## **Kolste small business bill blocked in Assembly**

MADISON – A bill written by Rep. Debra Kolste to help entrepreneurs and small business owners get access to investment capital was blocked in the Wisconsin Assembly on Tuesday.

Rep. Kolste made a motion to bring the Small Business Credit Now bill to the floor for a vote by the full Assembly. The motion was tabled on a party line vote.

Small Business Credit Now grants would allow businesses with fewer than 25 employees or less than \$5 million in gross receipts to receive up-front grants in lieu of tax credits upon approval by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp.

“Small businesses often can’t expand because they don’t have ready access to cash,” Kolste said. “Entrepreneurs have ideas to create businesses and jobs but are stymied because they can’t get loans. This bill would help get small businesses going.”

The bill, Assembly Bill 62, would have no fiscal impact on the state budget. It makes financing available to small businesses by allowing them to use state tax credits as equity for financing.

“The state has \$8 million in tax credits available now through WEDC,” Kolste said. “Too often, small businesses can’t get access to them because they have no tax liability.”

AB 62 remains in the Assembly Committee on Jobs and the Economy, where it has awaited a public hearing and vote since February.

“Wisconsin trails the Midwest and most of the nation in job creation,” Kolste noted. “This bill will create jobs. It had bipartisan support in committee last session. Blocking a jobs bill because of partisan politics is wrong for our state.”

The Assembly acted Tuesday to pass a bill co-sponsored by Kolste that will prohibit the inclusion of microbeads in personal care products beginning in December 2017. Microbeads, found in soap, toothpaste, lotion and other products are non-biodegradable plastic particles that make their way into the Great Lakes. They harm fish and aquatic life.

The Assembly approved a bill to set up regulation and licensing for ride-sharing taxi services such as Uber and Lyft. Rep. Kolste voted in favor of AB 143, which passed over the objections of Madison and Milwaukee representatives. The bill now goes to the Senate.

“These app-based services are coming and it is best to have a system in place,” Kolste said. “My hope is that cities with no viable traditional taxi service will benefit.”